

# MarylandLearningLinks.org

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Maryland Learning Links, a unique one-stop resource for parents, teachers and administrators, is funded through Maryland State Improvement Grant (#H323A070003-10). The Maryland Early Childhood Gateway (EC Gateway) was developed and is maintained through a partnership between the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) and the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education (CTE). MarylandLearningLinks.org is *the* one place to visit for information, guidance, and resources related to special education and early intervention services in the state of Maryland.

**SHARE AND CONNECT:** Chat with peers and offer comments.

**JOIN A GROUP:** Join groups that are focused on the issues you care about.

**STAY UP TO DATE:** Get the latest updates on the content and resources that matter to you.

## WHAT IS MARYLAND LEARNING LINKS?

Maryland Learning Links is an invaluable resource for educators and families related to special education in Maryland. Whether you are an administrator, teacher, provider or parent, you are sure to benefit from the site's comprehensive and user-friendly blend of knowledge and real-world practice, all of it built on the belief that every child can learn and achieve both inside and outside of the classroom. "Get Linked" to all things Special Education and Early Intervention in Maryland!

### JOIN AND PARTICIPATE!

Stay Connected Through Emerging Technologies:

- Use our interactive tools
- Read our blogs
- View and share videos
- Receive online newsletters
- Join a group or discussion

### CONNECT AND LEARN!

Explore Current Trends and Topics:

- Early Childhood Intervention and Education
- IFSP and IEP processes
- Co-Teaching
- Assistive Technology
- Leadership and Mentoring
- Family Involvement
- Strategies For Supporting Children with Disabilities
- Universal Design for Learning
- Professional Development

## LEARNING LINKS CHANNELS

### BIRTH THROUGH FIVE SYSTEM

Maryland's birth through five early childhood intervention and special education system of services are rooted in the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, which ensures that children with disabilities have the opportunity to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) just like children who do not have disabilities. Evidence shows that one of *the most* effective ways to achieve this is to reach children with disabilities when they are very young. In the **Birth Through Five System** channel you will find out how to make that happen.

## LEARNING LINKS CHANNELS, CONT.

### TEACHING ALL STUDENTS

Today's increasingly diverse classrooms present great opportunities as well as complex challenges for educators. How do you plan, instruct, and assess so that all of your students learn and achieve to their maximum potential? In the **Teaching All Students** channel we focus on a variety of real-world tools and strategies that can assist you in promoting success for all of your students, with a particular emphasis on students with disabilities. You will also see here that approaches like Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction, and Co-Teaching – while originally intended to address the needs of students with disabilities – can actually help every student that you teach.

### PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Now, more than ever, professional educators actively participate in their own lifelong learning adventure, their own. How do you keep up with all the advances in educational theory and practice? How do you mentor others while also developing as a professional yourself? How do you address the challenges and opportunities of teaching in the 21st century? Most importantly, how do you ensure that you are using the teaching strategies and techniques that are best for your particular students and for what you want them to learn? The **Professional Practice** channel of Maryland Learning Links helps to answer these questions and provides roadmaps for building a productive and rewarding career teaching *all* learners.

### LEADERSHIP

School administrators are the instructional leaders who lay the foundation for establishing a culture of collaboration with their staff, parents, and community to create a positive school climate that promotes student success. In the role of the instructional leader, how do you enhance your skills to effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities and other diverse learners? How do you empower and support your staff to deliver high-quality, research-based instruction that addresses the needs of all students? In the **Leadership** channel of the site, you will learn about innovative leadership, collaboration and how to become a catalyst for promoting high levels of achievement for all the students at your school.

### FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Parent involvement is *the* single most important factor in a child's success in school. When parents and educators work together as partners, all children can thrive in school and in their lives beyond school. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) makes parents equal partners – with local school systems, service providers, and education agencies – in the development of educational programs for their children with disabilities. So how do you, as a parent, make best use of this partnership? Maryland Learning Links' **Family and Community** channel will help you understand the special education laws, processes, and resources that are available to help your child succeed. You will also hear personal stories from other parents and learn about creative and educational activities that will keep your child engaged every day.

### POLICY AND PROCESS

While special education happens in the classroom, the foundation for special education is in a set of federal and State laws. What are these laws? How do they impact you and your students in the classroom? Through the **Policy and Process** channel, you will learn about the laws that form the basis for special education, with particular emphasis on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). There is also a wide variety of federal and State resources in this channel that will be useful for educators and families.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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